

assist them in improving their housing conditions and in meeting the responsibilities of tenancy or homeownership. The regulations contained in this part prescribe the procedures and requirements by which the Housing Counseling program will be administered. These regulations apply to all agencies participating in HUD's Housing Counseling program.

### § 214.3 Definitions.

The following definitions apply throughout this part:

*Action plan.* A plan that outlines what the housing counseling agency and the client will do in order to meet the client's housing goals and, when appropriate, addresses the client's housing problem(s).

*Affiliate.* A nonprofit organization participating in the HUD-related Housing Counseling program of a regional or national intermediary, or state housing finance agency. The affiliate organization is incorporated separately from the regional or national intermediary or state housing finance agency. An affiliate is:

- (1) Duly organized and existing as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization;
- (2) In good standing under the laws of the state of the organization; and
- (3) Authorized to do business in the states where it proposes to provide housing counseling services.

*Branch or branch office.* An organizational and subordinate unit of a local housing counseling agency, multi-state organization, regional or national intermediary, or state housing finance agency not separately incorporated or organized, that participates in HUD's Housing Counseling program. A branch or branch office must be in good standing under the laws of the state where it proposes to provide housing counseling services. A branch or branch office cannot be a subgrantee or affiliate.

*Clients.* Individuals or households who seek the assistance of an agency participating in HUD's Housing Counseling program to meet a housing need or resolve a housing problem.

*Counseling.* Counselor to client assistance that addresses unique financial circumstances or housing issues and focuses on ways of overcoming specific obstacles to achieving a housing goal

such as repairing credit, addressing a rental dispute, purchasing a home, locating cash for a down payment, being informed of fair housing and fair lending requirements of the Fair Housing Act, finding units accessible to persons with disabilities, avoiding foreclosure, or resolving a financial crisis. Except for reverse mortgage counseling, all counseling shall involve the creation of an action plan.

*Education.* Formal classes, with established curriculum and instructional goals provided in a group or classroom setting, covering topics applicable to groups of people such as, but not limited to:

- (1) Renter rights;
- (2) The homebuying process;
- (3) How to maintain a home;
- (4) Budgeting;
- (5) Fair housing;
- (6) Identifying and reporting predatory lending practices;
- (7) Rights for persons with disabilities; and
- (8) The importance of good credit.

*Housing counseling work plan.* A participating agency's plan to provide housing counseling activities and services in a specified geographic area to resolve or mitigate identified community needs and problems. The plan will also describe the objectives of the agency and the resources available to meet those objectives. An intermediary's state housing finance agency's (SHFA) or multistate organization's (MSO) plan includes similar information regarding the services they propose to provide to the network of affiliated agencies or branches participating in their HUD-related Housing Counseling program.

*Housing goal.* A realistic, short- or long-term objective set by the client, with advice from a housing counselor.

*HUD-approved housing counseling agencies.* Private and public nonprofit organizations that are exempt from taxation under section 501(a), pursuant to section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1996, 26 U.S.C. 501(a) and 501(c) and approved by HUD, in accordance with this part, to provide housing counseling services to clients directly, or through their affiliates or branches, and which meet the requirements set forth in this part.

## §214.100

## 24 CFR Ch. II (4–1–12 Edition)

*Intermediary.* A HUD-approved organization that provides housing counseling services indirectly through its branches or affiliates, for whom it exercises control over the quality and type of housing counseling services rendered. The Housing Counseling program recognizes two types of intermediaries, which include:

(1) *National intermediary.* A national intermediary provides, in multiple regions of the United States:

(i) Housing counseling services through its branches or affiliates or both; and

(ii) Administrative and supportive services to its network of affiliates or branches, including, but not limited to, pass-through funding, training, and technical assistance.

(2) *Regional intermediary.* A regional intermediary provides in a generally recognized region within the United States, such as the Southwest, Mid-Atlantic, New England:

(i) Housing counseling services through its branches or affiliates or both; and

(ii) Administrative and supportive services to its network of affiliates, or branches, including, but not limited to, pass-through funding, training, and technical assistance.

*Local housing counseling agency (LHCA).* A housing counseling agency that directly provides housing counseling services. An LHCA may have a main office, and one or more branch offices, in no more than two contiguous states.

*Multi-state organization (MSO).* A multi-state organization provides housing counseling services through a main office and branches in two or more states.

*Participating agency.* Participating agencies are all housing counseling and intermediary organizations participating in HUD's Housing Counseling program, including HUD-approved agencies, and affiliates and branches of HUD-approved intermediaries, HUD-approved MSOs, and state housing finance agencies.

*Reverse mortgage.* A mortgage that pays a homeowner loan proceeds drawn from accumulated home equity and that requires no repayment until a future time.

*State housing finance agency (SHFA).*

Any public body, agency, or instrumentality created by a specific act of a state legislature empowered to finance activities designed to provide housing and related facilities through land acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation throughout an entire state. SHFAs may provide direct counseling services or subgrant housing counseling funds, or both, to affiliated housing counseling agencies within the SHFA's state. "State" includes the several states, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

*Subgrantee.* An affiliate of a HUD-approved intermediary or SHFA that receives a subgrant of housing counseling funds provided under a HUD grant.

### Subpart B—Approval and Disapproval of Housing Counseling Agencies

#### §214.100 General.

An organization may be approved by HUD as a HUD-approved housing counseling agency upon meeting the requirements of §214.103 and upon completing the application procedures set forth in this subpart B.

(a) The approval of a counseling agency does not create or imply a warranty or endorsement by HUD of the listed agency, or their employees, including counselors, to a prospective client or to any other organization or individual, nor does it represent a warranty of any counseling provided by the agency. Approval means only that the agency has met the qualifications and conditions prescribed by HUD.

(b) *Effective date.* Agencies approved by HUD on or before October 29, 2007 and agencies that have submitted applications to HUD on or before September 28, 2007 and that are subsequently approved, are required to be in full compliance with the requirements in this part on October 1, 2007. Agencies approved after October 29, 2007 must comply with this part.